

Meeting Minutes, June 1, 2006

City Center Advisory Commission

CCAC Members Present: Jim Andrews, Carolyn Barkley, Gretchen Buehner, Alexander Craghead (Alternate), Suzanne Gallagher, Marland Henderson, Ralph Hughes (alternate), Lily Lilly, Mike Marr, Roger Potthoff, Mike Stevenson, Carl Switzer

CCAC Members Absent: Judy Munro, Alice Ellis Gaut

Others Present: Mike Curtis

Staff Present: Phil Nachbar

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Mike Marr called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30PM.

2. Approve Minutes

The minutes were approved with corrections.

During the process of approving minutes, there was discussion about the Hall Blvd. / 99W Intersection project now underway. Phil Nachbar provided a brief update. The concern was raised that the Citizens should have input into the design process for a gateway at the intersection. Gretchen identified the new Citizen Advisor Group of the Transportation / Finance Committee as an appropriate group to provide input. Phil Nachbar responded that the CCAC would have an opportunity to review and provide comment on preliminary design when that became available and that other citizen input meetings could be set up to address their concerns.

The other issue that was raised during the approval of the minutes was developer meetings. Susan Gallagher and Lily Lilly raised the concern that there was interest in organizing and working with developers. A list of developers was read, and three (3) new potential developers were mentioned, Rudy Kadlub, Community Development Associates of Alpha Engineering, and Barry Cain of Graymoor, Inc. Phil Nachbar suggested that the assistance of the CCAC is needed to help organize meetings with developers, and determine what the goals should be.

3. Call for additional Agenda items

Prior to beginning discussion of the first agenda item, Mike Marr asked if there were any additional items that people would like to add to the agenda for discussion. Roger Potthoff brought up the concern that he stated he and others had about the functioning of the Commission and its leadership. Roger stated that there was a need for new leadership.

There was discussion about the need for a formal structure to the Commission, in particular, that it did not have by-laws. Gretchen mentioned that the Commission had been set up on an “ad hoc” basis by the Council because it was unknown at the time whether Urban Renewal would be approved by the voters. She indicated that now that Urban Renewal had passed, that there was a need to develop by-laws, and that the Commission could have a hand in developing them. Several members in the group raised their concerns at being assigned on a temporary basis without having been told. It was mentioned by Gretchen that the resolution setting up the CCDA, (City Council acting as Urban Renewal Agency) also set up the CCAC, but that nothing other than that had been done.

Mike Marr asked the group to tell him what their specific concerns were with regard to his leadership. He stated that if the group had concerns with his leadership style, that they should tell him what they were. The group was initially reluctant to identify their concerns but decided to address Mike’s question directly by each person separately discussing his / her concerns.

Roger was the first to address Mike’s request, and stated that it was not his intention to replace Mike Marr as Chairperson at the meeting, but that leadership needed to be addressed. It was mentioned that perhaps a separate meeting could be set up to address this issue. He also stated to the group that he had contacted Mike Marr prior to the meeting to let him know of the concerns that certain members have with him as the Chairperson, and had asked him to step down voluntarily. Roger talked in general about leadership, the need for collaboration, and the need for by-laws to govern the group.

Roger mentioned Mike’s “divisiveness” as poor leadership. Examples included the “boundary issue” for the Urban Renewal District, and the need for mediation to resolve it as an example of poor leadership. He stated that the Mike’s position on the boundary issue and how he dealt with the group resulted in “defeating the morale” of the group. He indicated that the fact that the Urban Renewal boundary issue could only be resolved by mediation showed an inability to build consensus. Roger talked about the need to “get opinions” in a situation like that and that it wasn’t done. Roger also read from an email that he stated Mike Marr had sent directly to the City Council without copying other CCAC members about how the group was divided, recommending specific changes to the group. Roger indicated that this was another example of Mike’s divisiveness. Roger also stated that Mike’s going directly to Council members, or the City Manager to criticize OTAK, Inc., the City’s design consultant for Downtown streetscape, and Staff, rather than dealing with his concerns more directly was divisive. Roger also said that he felt that Mike had to have control over everything and was unwilling to let other people to get involved if they did not agree with his agenda. Roger stated that too much control causes people “to be reluctant to participate”.

Gretchen, in response to Roger’s comment stated that the Downtown Improvement Plan was just a “concept plan” and that it would change and be

“tweaked”, meaning that it was a general plan, that would be built upon and perhaps modified as projects got implemented.

Lily Lily spoke about her not feeling “respected” as a result of the way Mike interacted with her and the group. She stated that there were many people in the group that had a variety of “skill sets” that were not being used, and that the group was unable to reach a “higher vision” because of the leadership style of Mike.

Suzanne Gallagher mentioned that the group needed to begin developing a “partnership” with developers and the need for “brainstorming”. She mentioned that the group needed the kind of leadership that would “attract” good people to the process. She mentioned that she did not know anything about the background of other individuals on the committee, and that no attempt had been made to access people’s skills to work collaboratively. She indicated that she had just finished managing a \$300,000 State legislative campaign, and had skills that could have contributed to the PAC’s efforts on the Urban Renewal vote, but that her skills were not tapped. She stated that she had initially shown interest but was told that her ideas were unwanted because ‘they’ were happy with Mike’s. She stated that she “felt unwanted”. She cited this as an example of a lack in leadership that she and others’ talents were not being utilized when needed.

Carl Switzer registered his concerns expressing an interest in taking “a leadership role” with the PAC but getting no response from Mike. He stated that meetings for the PAC were scheduled during the daytime when he and others worked, and were unable to attend. Both Carl and Lily had requested that meeting times be moved to accommodate those working during the day. Carl stated that decisions were made “top down” and no accommodation to include him in the PAC was made. In response to a concern raised that there had be some ensuing plan to remove Mike and install Carl as Chair, Carl mentioned that it was only 3 days ago that he had heard about an interest in him becoming Chair. Carl stated that there were a few options; to ask City Council to reconstruct the Committee or the Committee could chose to replace Mike Marr as the Chair.

Mike Stevenson made several general comments about it being unfortunate that the group had gotten to this point. In response to Gretchen’s comment that Mike had ridiculed her with regard to comments she had made at other meetings, Mike Stevenson brought up an example of Gretchen ridiculing him about a comment he had made at another meeting.

Gretchen discussed her interest in becoming part of the PAC, but felt deterred by Mike’s agenda. She gave an example of Lisa Olson asking her to make a presentation to the PAC, but not doing it because she felt that she would need Mike’s approval beforehand. She stated that she told Lisa Olson that she would not approach Mike Marr unless Lisa had talked to Mike first. She stated that she felt “belittled” when dealing with Mike, and as a result avoided dealing with him

on projects or ideas in which she was interested. She provided this as an example of a lack of leadership to bring about collaboration.

Gretchen mentioned the good efforts of Mike Marr and Marland Henderson as members of the PAC. She stated that they worked hard, and Mike had given up his time in staging open houses at his Sub shop downtown. There was some additional conversation about the CCAC's declining meeting attendance and the problem that some said they encountered when trying to get involved with activities of the PAC. The comment had been made that Mike and Marland had done the bulk of the work in the PAC. Roger responded that he decided to make a presentation to the Fireman's Union, and said that he didn't go to Mike because he "sensed his response". Gretchen stated that she did some of her own additional, promotional work for Urban Renewal by walking the neighborhoods.

Carolyn Barkley talked about her impressions of both Roger and Carl, stating that she did not have anything against either of them, but did not know where Roger stood on issues. She mentioned that she was very impressed with Roger's public speaking ability. She stated that she was offended by the fact that Council had set up a commission that was temporary and intended to be recommissioned without being told. Nearly all of the CCAC members present raised the concern about being appointed and possibly dismissed without being told this. Caroline also raised the concern that people in the group had formed their own group with 7 votes to accomplish what they wanted without talking to others. She indicated that the group could no longer function together as adults in openly communicating with one another.

Alexander Craghead (alternate) indicated his anger at not being informed about this issue beforehand. Gretchen responded that it was her intent to have everyone informed about the leadership issue but some people had not followed up to call others.

The issue of what actions the group wanted to take was brought up. A discussion of the options took place, in which Marland brought up the option (motion) of Alexander Craghead serving as interim Chair. There was no confirmation of the motion.

There was discussion about whether the Mayor or others on City Council had been notified. Gretchen indicated that she had talked to the Mayor, Craig Dirksen, and the City Manager, Craig Prosser.

Marland Henderson stated that he did not think that the Commission could survive given the state that it was now in.

Alexander identified three necessary motions and / or votes. These included: 1) pass a motion and/or vote of No Confidence for Mike Marr as Chair of the CCAC, 2) pass a motion and/or vote to replace the Chair with an interim Chair at the meeting, and if step 2) passes, then 3) pass a motion and/or vote to install

Carl Switzer as interim Chair of the CCAC until a formal structure for the CCAC is established by City Council.

Mike Marr called for any and all motions and votes as identified.

The results were as follows:

- 1) Vote of No Confidence: Pass—5 Yes, 4 No, 2 Absent, 1 Abstention.
- 2) Vote to Replace Chair at the Meeting: Pass—5 Yes, 4 No, 2 Absent, 1 Abstention
- 3) Vote to Install Carl Switzer as interim Chair of the CCAC until a formal structure for the CCAC is established by City Council: Pass—5 Yes, 2 Absent, 5 Abstentions

Once the vote was taken several of the members left before the meeting was adjourned. Carl Switzer encouraged people to continue to try to work together. There was some discussion of the work program. Phil Nachbar mentioned that he would be bringing the Downtown Implementation Strategy to City Council on June 20 and that it was important for the Commission to review and provide input prior to that if possible. He also indicated that the Commission's work program over the next several months would be demanding and that in order to allow enough time for their involvement, meeting twice per month is suggested. Members present indicated a willingness to meet more frequently and it was decided that the CCAC would meet on June 8 and 15 to focus on the Strategy. Lily Lily requested that Staff provide a work program for the next several months so the Commission could anticipate what they would be working on.